productivity and quality of service as well as to bring in competitiveness in Port Services, the Port Sector has been thrown open to private sector participation.

(b) and (c) As per the provisions of Indian Ports Act, 1908, the responsibility for development/upgradation of minor ports lies entirely with the State Government concerned, which have administrative control on such ports.

Selling of Land for Creating a Pension Fund for CPT Employees

3754. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA : Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have asked the Calcutta Port Trust to formulate a scheme for selling some of its land to utilize the sale proceeds for creating a Pension Fund for its employees;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Calcutta Port Trust is unable to meet its annual liabilities of pensioners out of its own internal resources ;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor ; and

(e) the steps taken/proposed to implement economy measures in Calcutta Port Trust and reduce its unnecessary expenditure ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) Because of large number of pensioners in Calcutta Port Trust, the current income of the Port Trust is not adequate to meet the pension liabilities.

(e) Various economy measures aimed at reduction in expenditure, such as reducing overtime allowance, electricity charges, fringe benefits and voluntary retirement of the employees have been initiated by the Calcutta Port Trust.

Proposal to Link Ganga and Brahmaputra

3755. SHRI S. RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI :

SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA :

Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government propose to link Ganga and the Brahmaputra rivers as national waterways to facilitate navigational links ;

(b) if so, the details thereof ;

(c) the States which would be connected through the river route ;

(d) whether the problem of devastating floods in the Brahmaputra every year would be tackled ; and

(e) if so, the details of action plan ?

THE MINISTER OP STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV) : (a) and (b) The National Waterway No.1 i.e. the Ganga from Allahabad to Haldia and National Waterway No.2 i.e., the Brahmaputra from Dhubri to Sadiya are connected through the Sunderbans waterway route and the waterways through Bangladesh under the Inland Water Transit and Trade Protocol between India and Bangladesh. Inland vessles ply between Calcutta/Haldia in NW-1 and Pandu in NW-2.

(c) The river route connects the States of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal and Assam.

(d) and (e) Linking of the Ganga and the Brahmaputra rivers as National Waterways to facilitate navigational links is not a flood related activity.

Decline in Cargo Traffic in Kolkata and Mumbai Ports

3756. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA : Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been massive decline in the cargo traffic in Kolkata and Mumbai Ports;

(b) if so, the details thereof indicating the extent of drop of the cargo traffic for each of the last three years showing the percentage of decline ; and

(c) the action Government have taken or propose to take to streamline the existing cargo handling system in the above ports and other important ports of the country ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The details of cargo handled at Kolkata Dock System and Mumbai Port Trust during last three years